

# INDEXA



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A non-profit organization for the enhancement of amateur radio, worldwide peace, and friendship  
Daily Information Session — 14.236 MHz @ 23:30z

## *DXpedition by Clipperton DX Club*

# **TO4E/TO4WW—EUROPA 2003** *by Dany Prevostat, F5CW*

For thirty years, Europa has been a nature reserve and island access has been severely limited to the military personnel needed to assure sovereignty; technicians from the French Weather Bureau (Météo France); and occasional scientists. Consequently, activating the island of Europa was not an easy task! Many difficulties had to be surmounted but in September 2003 Didier, F5OGL, and Rafik, F5CQ, developed a workable plan and on 21 October 2003 they got the green light for the DXpedition.

One of the first tasks was to study the various ways to get to Europa. Because transportation to the island was limited we accepted the invitation to travel to the island by French Navy boat and return by Army airplane. The itinerary was to sail on *La Grandière* on November 17th with an estimated arrival on Europa on November 24th. The original plan was for a mission lasting 12 to 15 days but final travel arrangements made the trip closer to a month. As a result, several operators had to drop out for business reasons. In addition, Didier's, F5OGL, surgeon determined that he was unfit for the trip. This was a bitter pill for Didier to swallow but after analyzing the situation, he made the sad decision to cancel his participation in the DXpedition. He handed over the reins to



**The TO4E/TO4WW Team**

Dany, F5CW, while he stayed in France to handle details with authorities, sponsors, and amateur radio organizations.

Three weeks prior to departure, six operators had to be replaced and they all had to be French military. At the last minute Pascal, F5PTM, and Jean-Louis, F5NHJ, were recruited. Finally, the team was reduced to five operators: Dany, F5CW; Eric, F5JJK; Freddy, F5IRO; Jean-Louis, F5NHJ; and Pascal, F5PTM. Rafik, F5CQ, would run our Internet site.

F5CW took charge of managing the freight. The authorized baggage

limit was set at 300 kg. As a result, we had to carefully select our equipment: a single amplifier, a few heavy antennas, a few poles for antennas, etc. Finally, three transceivers, one amplifier, one beam, several verticals, two PCs, 500 metres of coax, 800 metres of wire for radials, and accessories were sent to load on the boat on November 13th.

### **The trip begins**

On November 15th the team assembled at Orly airport in Paris where we were met by members of the F6KOP

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**inside... International DX Convention**

**SK Report**

**Ballot: 2004-2005**

## Europa.....from page 1



**Europa Island**

radio club who came to wish us good luck. We checked our 35 kg of supplementary baggage, primarily the Titanex antennas modified to fit 2 metre long boxes, and our heavy bags containing accessory equipment—2 transceivers, 3 PCs, and band filters borrowed from Flo, F5CWU.

When we arrived at St. Denis Airport on Reunion Island, we were assisted by Alain Gillard; Eric, F5JJK; Yvon, FR1GZ; and Captain Burban. Because he had a busy schedule we could not meet with Jacques, FR5ZU, but Yvon, FR1GZ, brought a 9-element VHF antenna that allowed us to make several attempts at meteor scatter with the South Africans.

On November 17th we boarded the light transport ship *La Grandière* and at 1800 hours we left port, destination the high seas enroute to Mayotte where we were authorized to disembark for a short visit. Our contact, Major Salou, provided us with access to the Internet to exchange messages. We made final

purchases (fans, sunblock, etc.) and sent mail through the local post office. It was then time to think about leaving. On board, the boatswain announced that he had been told we had 123 barrels of fuel rather than 120. The three barrels that we had requested were therefore on board. We left the lagoon before nightfall to assure complete security.

On November 22nd, we watched the film *Europa, a Savage Island*. The operators did not want to disembark due to the mosquitoes; of course, they were joking! Millions of mosquitoes couldn't stop a



**Dany, F5CW, operates QRP by battery**

DXpedition of this importance. We took precautions for mosquito control, including repellent, special clothing, and mosquito netting (one per station).

The 23rd was our last day on board. The Marine officers of PC *télécoms*, intrigued by our DXpedition, allowed us to use their equipment to announce our imminent arrival.

### Europa

On the 24th, we rose early to view the coast of Europa at daybreak, an enchanting site with a particularly calm sea. Typically, boats take two or three attempts to reach anchorage, as the sea floor is at an extreme slope. This time, we succeeded on the first try!

After much study, we knew the best place to locate would be in the



**The Europa team displays INDEXA flag!**

vicinity of the weather station since their transmission sessions are infrequent and the frequencies they use would not cause reciprocal problems. For our operations, our filters would protect us. Our location was spacious, and it would be easy to install three stations. Overall, we were less than 100 metres from the sea, a very good location for the low-band verticals.

By 1300 hours the tide was again favorable and we resumed unloading. A large quantity of water was delivered in bulk, in addition to bottles, 28 barrels of fuel, and supplies. Three scientists, picked up at Mayotte, disembarked. They were there to capture six turtles and fit them with beacons to study their movements after their release near Juan de Nova and Madagascar.



**Turtle digs into base of vertical**

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**TO4E operating site**

After four round trips across very hot sand, our equipment was unloaded and we quickly prepared a table for the first station. By the end of the day we had completed our first QSO. At 1608Z, F5OGL was the first contact from the TO4E station.

The first days were arduous. We had to work outside to assemble the antennas, unroll the coax and radials, pound in the pegs, prepare the area, and erect the poles and big GP. The instructions were strict and risks could not be taken. There was no doctor and very little serious medication available. A major wound would have marked the end of the DXpedition.

### The Contest

On the 28th we finished installing and testing the antennas. We were now ready for the contest. TO4WW would be active for 48 hours, and TO4E would be active as the availability of operators permitted.

Then a surprise! A shuttle airplane arrived at 1100 hours. Drat. There were no barrels of fuel on board. We met with the island officer who made arrangements for us to receive the necessary oil but 5 minutes before the contest, the generator refused to start. Due to the time it took to analyze the problem, shift to the other generator and restart, we lost 15 minutes. We were actually active for 46 hours due to two power outages, probably because of rain intruding into the electrical system. Finally, we had 4100 QSOS in the TO4WW log, with several dupes.

### After the contest

Following the contest we returned to a limited operating schedule in order to conserve energy. We existed on 5.25 hours per day until we found a working battery. It would recharge by the generator in 5 hours and we could have a station on a different schedule and offer additional QSOs.

On December 12th there were more power problems causing thawing of the freezer elements. Basic nourishment was compromised but the baker made wonderful things with few ingredients.

On December 14th a tropical depression arrived and spawned a cyclone christened CELA. The V40, the



**F5IRO visits Eurpoa landmark.**

only antenna left in place, was very resilient. On the 18th, we took down the last antenna and finished packing for our return trip.

### Conclusion

During 210 hours of operation 34,000 QSOs were realized.

We would like to extend a big thank you to those who helped and contributed to making this DXpedition a reality. Our Internet URL is <http://europa2003.free.fr/>. Here you will find lots of information with logos and links to our sponsors.

The QSL manager for TO4E/TO4WW is F5OGL.

*(Editor's note: This article is condensed from the original.)*

## INDEXA visits 55th Annual International DX Convention at Visalia, CA



**3B9C team member, John, N7CQQ (l.), greets INDEXA staffer Don, KB6KTV, at the 55th International DX Convention in Visalia, CA.**

Staff member Don Sereni, KB6KTV, and his XYL, Camille, represented INDEXA for the second consecutive year at the 55th Annual International DX Convention in Visalia. During the convention Don and Camille recruited many new members, renewed expired memberships, and distributed INDEXA memorabilia.

This year's meeting was hosted by the Southern California DX Club, SCDXC. INDEXA is grateful for their overwhelming hospitality and their extraordinary efforts to accommodate the International DX Association!



**AI, W6NGW, signs INDEXA guest book**

## INDEXA Ballot—2004-2005

Office	Nominee	Yes	No	Write-in
President	AA7UC			
Vice-President	ZL1AMO			
Secretary-Treasurer	W4UNP			
Director: 1 year	XE1CI			

### Voting Instructions

Please vote by paper ballot.

If you receive the e-version of the newsletter, print the ballot and mail it in paper form only; *not* via e-mail. If you are unable to print your ballot, the election officer, W4UNP, will, at your request, mail a paper ballot to you via the USPS.

All ballots must be returned to the election officer no later than 30 September 2004.

### Election Officer

Bill Jennings, W4UNP  
Secretary-Treasurer, INDEXA  
630 Whitepine Drive  
Catawba, SC 29704 USA

## Silent Key



**SK John Sadler  
W5VCS**

On September 26, 2003, John Sadler, W5VCS, a valued member of INDEXA, passed away at the age of 85.

INDEXA's thoughts and prayers remain with John's XYL, Helen.

**The INDEXA newsletter is now available online. To convert to the e-version, contact Bill Jennings, W4UNP, at [w4unp@comporium.net](mailto:w4unp@comporium.net).**

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